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PERCEIVED RISK OF WORK-RELATED INJURY
AND INTENTIONS TO CHANGE EMPLOYMENT

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Abstract

An extensive survey of 263 employed men and women examined the effects of length of job tenure, age, ability to find a better job, positive job features (pay, job security, intrinsic interest), and perceived job hazardousness on intentions to stay with or leave one's current employer and job search activities. Multivariate analyses using regression and log linear techniques were carried out. Positive job features dominated the decision to stay or leave. The more highly rated a job was in terms of pay, security, and interest, the lower the desire to change employers. However, respondents rating their jobs low on these attributes were highly inclined to leave if the working conditions were unsafe. Older employees were more motivated than younger workers to change jobs when working conditions were unsafe. This was especially the case when they had social responsibilities, such as children to support. Employee youthfulness, brief job tenure, ability to find a better job, and perceived workplace hazardousness, in general, tended to increase intentions to leave and job search activities.

PERCEIVED RISK OF WORK-RELATED INJURY AND INTENTIONS

TO CHANGE EMPLOYMENT

INTRODUCTION

A recent study (Noweir, 1984) documents the fact that aversive working conditions, in this case, excessive noise in textile mills, increase the occurrence of both personal-injury accidents on the job and higher rates of employee absenteeism as a means of escaping from this hazardous environment. Other studies suggest that dissatisfied employees may actually precipitate accidents in which they are the victims in order to legitimize their withdrawal from the work site (Hill & Trist, 1953; Verhaegen et al., 1976). The present study expands on this literature relating accidents and withdrawal from work by examining the extent to which one's perceptions of hazardous working conditions motivate a desire to seek alternative, safer employment.

A decision to change jobs frequently depends on weighting relative costs and benefits of such a move. The costs of changing might include sacrificing job seniority, leaving old friends and workmates, uprooting a family, and having to develop skills appropriate to the new job. The benefits, on the other hand, can be equally numerous, including higher pay, opportunities for advancement, better working conditions, and the challenge of undertaking a new career. The possibility of suffering personal injury that may seriously incapacitate or even kill as a "cost" certainly merits consideration in an examination of this decision-making process.

Studies of natural disasters, such as earthquakes in California (Kiecolt et al., 1982) and radioactive contamination at Three-Mile Island (Davidson et al., 1982) indicate that the greater one's perceived sense of risk, the more likely they are to move to a safer location. Factors increasing one's stake in

a threatened community, such as owning a home, having children enrolled in local schools, length of residency in the community, and number of friends still living there, all tend to increase the costs of leaving and, thereby, lessen the likelihood of a move being made, even when a high degree of personal danger exists for those remaining (Kieclot et al., 1982). In an organizational context, commitment factors such as length of job tenure (Keller, 1983), the need to earn a living to support a family (Watson, 1981), and overall involvement in organizational activities (Clegg, 1983) tend to decrease absenteeism and turnover. They also represent potential costs that lessen one's willingness to move to another job.

In this study, the predictive power of perceived risk of injury as a variable influencing intentions to change jobs is compared to various other factors which may also enter into decision-making. It is expected that older workers will be less likely to want to change employers because they would find it costly to learn new job skills, too personally disruptive to relinquish friendships at work, etc. Secondly, employees with longer job tenure are less likely to change jobs because it would mean sacrificing accumulated seniority, job security, and benefits. Thirdly, it is hypothesized that one's perceived ability to find a "better" job will affect intentions to leave. Those persons perceiving fewer alternative sources of employment will tend to stay. Fourthly, the more positively one judges his current employment in terms of amount of pay earned, job security, and intrinsic interest in the work, the more likely an employee will stay with his present job. Finally, workplace hazardousness is a cost increasing the desire to find safer work. The greater one's chance of suffering personal injury on the job, the greater the motivation to leave that employer. Risk of injury is also expected to have an interactive effect with employee's age, length of service, ability to find a better job, and perception

of positive job features. Specifically, risk of injury will have a greater impact on intentions to leave when current job commitment is low. Low commitment will occur when: (1) an employee is young rather than old; (2) they have acquired little job tenure; (3) the ability to find a better job is perceived to be great, and (4) the current job is unattractive in terms of pay, job security, and interest.

METHOD

1. The Sample.

Data analyzed in this study are taken from a larger survey of the quality of working life conducted in Edmonton, Alberta in 1983. Questions were asked in this interview-based survey concerning a respondent's job history, work characteristics, workplace, and occupational safety.

A simple random sample of 547 addresses was drawn from a computerized list of addresses compiled by the City of Edmonton in its 1982 census enumeration. Nursing homes and temporary residences were deleted from the sample. Within each selected household, one eligible person (18 years or older) was selected as the respondent for the one hour interview.

Of the 547 addresses originally drawn, 420 completed interviews (76.8%) were achieved. Of these 54.0% are male and 46.0% are female. A comparison of data from the survey with 1981 Canadian census statistics reveals a high degree of similarity in terms of household and age composition. This indicates that the sample is highly representative of the general adult population in Edmonton (Kinzel, 1983).

Table 1. Variables Analyzed in the Study

Variable	Questionnaire Items	Response Categories
1. Desire to stay with employer (Y_1)	I would like to stay with my present employer as long as possible.	strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7)
2. Will stay with employer (Y_2)	How likely is it you will be with your present employer a year from now?	very unlikely (1) to very likely (7)
3. Age (X_1)	What is your age?	number of years
4. Months at current job (X_2)	How long have you worked in your present job?	number of months
5. Ability to change jobs	I could get a better job if I quit my present one.	strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7)
6. Positive job features (X_4)	The pay is good. The job security is good. the work is interesting.	strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7)
7. Chance of injury (X_5)	My chance of being hurt are pretty remote in the kind of work I do.	strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7)

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
1. Desire to stay with employer (Y_1)	5.32	6.00	1.94
2. Will stay with employer (Y_2)	5.47	7.00	2.06
3. Looked for another job (Y_3)	1.25	1.00	0.43
4. Age (X_1)	38.06	33.00	15.11
5. Months at current job (X_2)	55.18	30.00	70.42
6. Ability to change jobs (X_3)	2.50	2.00	1.80
7. Positive job features (X_4)	15.84	16.00	3.71
8. Chance of injury (X_5)	5.27	6.00	2.04

In the present study, data are analyzed for 263 respondents. These are respondents who: (1) gave complete answers to all of the items used in the study and, (2) were employed outside the home on a full-time or part-time basis. Of these 263 respondents, 59.0% are male and 41.0% are female.

2. The Variables.

Tables 1 and 2 provide a detailed description of variables analyzed in this study. Three dependent variables of employment stability are looked at:

(1) desire to stay with one's current employer; (2) perceived likelihood of still working for the same employer a year from now; (3) whether or not the respondent had looked for a different job in the last year.

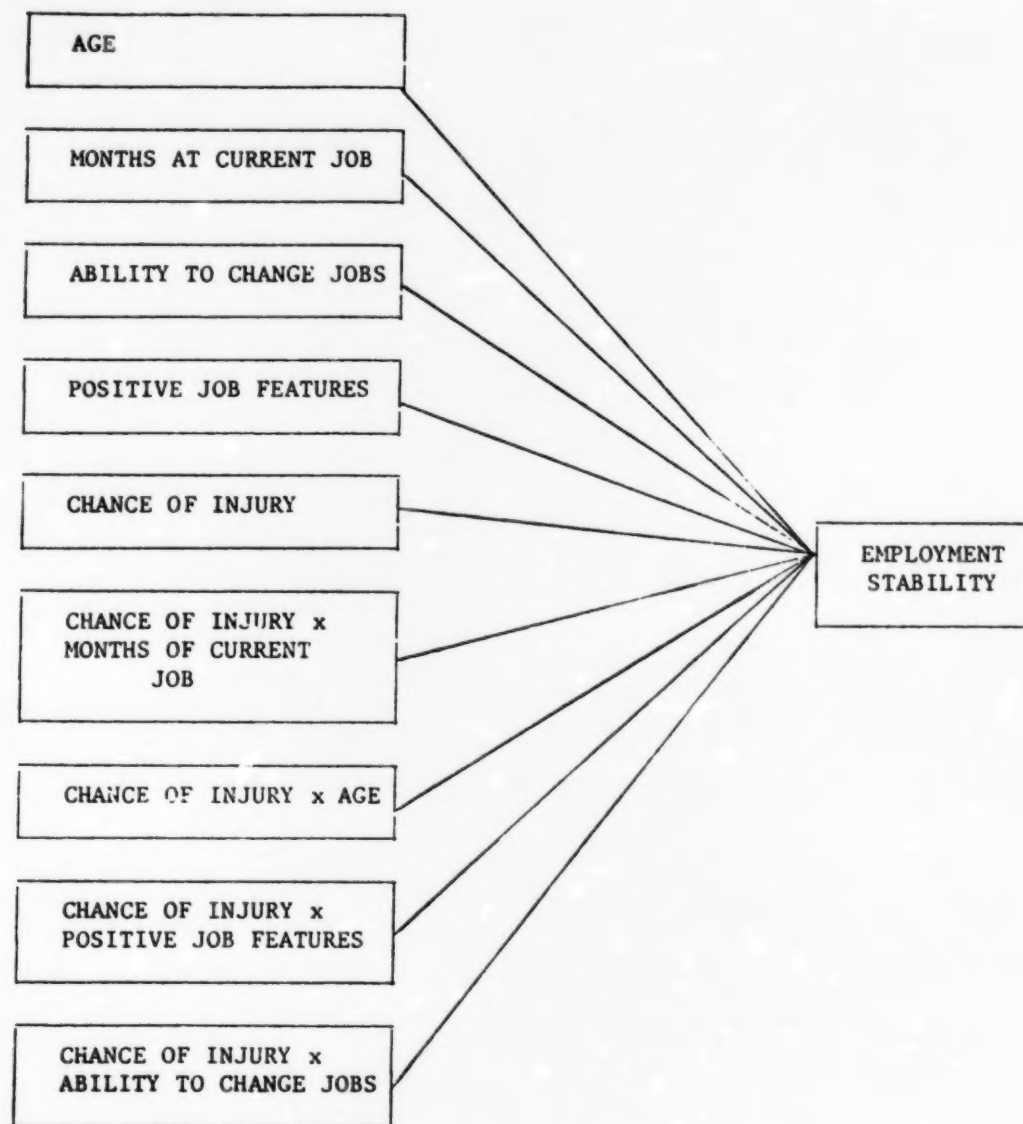
Predictor variables include: (1) respondent's age; (2) how long the respondent has worked at their present job; (3) ability of respondent to find a better job if they quit their present one; (4) perceived chance of being hurt on the job; (5) an index of positive job features. This index represents the addition of scores provided by the respondent on three survey items measuring the satisfactoriness of: (a) amount of money earned from one's job; (b) job security; (c) intrinsic interest in the work.

In addition, four interaction terms are examined as possible predictors of employment stability. These two-way terms involve the variable "chance of injury" and each of the other predictors, i.e., age, length of time on the job, positive job features, and ability to find a better job.

3. Analyses.

The general model tested in this study is shown in Figure 1. The two variables, likelihood of working for the same employer a year from now and desire to stay with one's current employer, were responded to in terms of scales having seven response categories. As such, these constituted interval-scaled variables, suitable for multiple regression analysis. A stepwise regression of

Figure 1. Model Showing Hypothesized Predictors of Desire to Stay with Current Employer, Likelihood of Staying, and Looking for Another Job



each variable was carried out. Each final regression model was trimmed to include only those predictors and interactions with unstandardized coefficients significant at the 0.05 level or better.

Since the third measure of employment stability, whether or not the respondent had looked for a different job, had only two responses -- yes and no -- log linear analysis was considered appropriate. A variation on the general log linear model, logit analysis, was employed with a single dependent variable and the two-way and three-way terms being examined that are featured in the model presented in Figure 1. In other words, the form of the logit model paralleled the regression models tested for the other two dependent variables.

RESULTS

1. Bivariate Relationships.

a. Desire to stay with one's employer.

In Table 3 all of the predictor variables except for months at current job are significantly correlated with a respondent's desire to stay with his present employer. Older respondents are more interested in staying as are respondents associating many positive job features with their present occupation. Those respondents believing that there is only a remote possibility for injury on the job are also more interested in retaining their present job. Those persons who feel that they have little opportunity to find a job better than their present one are more interested in staying than are persons with greater optimism about their prospects.

b. Respondent will be with his employer in 12 months.

All of the predictors are statistically significant for this measure of employment stability. Older respondents, those with longer job tenure, and those perceiving little chance of injury on the job are more likely to state

Table 3. Intercorrelation Matrix

Variables	X_1	X_2	X_3	X_4	X_5	$X_5 \times X_1$	$X_5 \times X_2$	$X_5 \times X_3$	$X_5 \times X_4$	Y_1	Y_2
Age: X_1	--	0.50***	-0.11*	0.18**	0.17**	0.72***	0.49***	-0.03	0.22***	0.27***	0.18**
Months at job: X_2	--	--	0.02	0.21***	0.12**	0.41***	0.95***	0.06	0.19***	0.09	0.14*
Ability to change jobs: X_3	--	--	--	-0.31***	-0.02	-0.09	0.00	0.82***	-0.17**	-0.36***	-0.27***
Positive job features: X_4	--	--	--	--	0.24***	0.27***	0.22***	-0.17**	0.70***	0.40***	0.53***
Chance of injury: X_5	--	--	--	--	--	0.77***	0.32***	0.43***	0.87***	0.22***	0.30***
$X_5 \times X_1$	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.55***	0.26***	0.72***	0.32***	0.30***
$X_5 \times X_2$	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.14*	0.35***	0.13*	0.19**
$X_5 \times X_3$	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.22***	-0.18**	-0.05
$X_5 \times X_4$	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.35***	0.45***
Desire to stay with employer: Y_1	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.45***
Will stay with employer: Y_2	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

that they plan to be with their current employer a year from now. Those respondents attributing a large number of positive features to their current job are also likely to remain. An inability to find a better job is correlated with employment stability.

c. Looked for another job.

Pearson Chi Squares were calculated between this dependent variable and dichotomized versions of each of the predictor variables. All of the relationships except that involving chance of injury are statistically significant at the 0.05 level or better. Thus, we find that 39.0% of the respondents at or below the median of 30 months working at their present job have looked for another job. This contrasts with only 10.0% of respondents with job tenure longer than 30 months (Chi Square = 29.77, df = 1, p less than 0.001). Thirty percent of respondents who feel that they have a better than average chance of finding a better job did, indeed, look for alternative employment in the last year. Only 18.0% of respondents at or below the median on ability to change jobs looked for other work (Chi Square = 5.53, df = 1, p less than 0.05). Thirty-four percent of respondents who rated their current job at or below the median in terms of money, security, and interest, have looked for another job, whereas only 13.0% of respondents above the median have looked (Chi Square = 16.33, df = 1, p less than 0.001). Fourteen percent of respondents older than 33 years have looked for work versus 34.0% of younger respondents (Chi Square = 14.12, df = 1, p less than 0.001).

Looked for another job in the last twelve months is significantly related to respondent's belief that he will be with his current employer a year from now (Chi Square = 14.92, df = 1, p less than 0.001) but is not related to the other dependent variable, a desire to stay with the present employer as long as possible (Chi Square = 3.30, df = 1, p = 0.07). Respondents above the median in

their belief that they will be with their present employer a year from now are unlikely to report searching for another job (14.0%) while respondents below the median (34.0%) are more likely to have looked for another job.

2. Regression Analyses.

a. Desire to stay with one's employer.

In Table 4 three variables account for 28.0% of the variance in reported desire to stay with the current employer. Positive job features is the strongest predictor, explaining 17.0% of the variance at the first stage of the stepwise regression. Ability to change jobs and the chance of injury X age interaction term are entered in subsequent stages. Respondents perceiving that they can readily change to a better job are less desirous of staying with their current employer.

An analysis of the interaction term is presented in Table 5. The dependent variable, desire to stay with the current employer, is regressed on the predictor, chance of injury, for two age categories: those 33 years or younger and those older than 33 years. While chance of injury is positively related to the dependent variable for each age group, indicating that desire to stay with an employer increases the more remote injury is perceived to be, this tendency is the strongest for the older respondents. Each unit increase in perceived chance of injury for older respondents has more than 1.5 times the impact on desire to leave one's current employer than it does for younger respondents.

b. Respondent will be with his employer in 12 months.

Thirty-six percent of the variation in this measure of job commitment is explained by three of the individual predictors and the chance of injury X positive job features interaction. Once again, positive job features is the most prominent factor influencing the belief that one will stay with his employer. Perceived chance of injury enters in the second step, accounting for

Table 4. Stepwise Regression Analysis of Desire to Stay With Employer

Step	Predictor Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standard Error	Standardized Coefficients	t-scores	R ²	Change in R ²
1	positive job features	0.22	0.03	0.42	7.23*	0.17	0.17
	<u>constant</u>	1.81	0.49				
2	positive job features	0.18	0.03	0.34	5.75*	0.23	0.06
	ability to change jobs	-0.27	0.06	-0.25	4.31*		
	<u>constant</u>	3.15	0.57				
3	positive job features	0.15	0.03	0.28	4.71*	0.28	0.05
	ability to change jobs	-0.27	0.06	-0.25	4.41*		
	chance of injury x age	0.0045	0.0011	0.23	4.16*		
	<u>constant</u>	2.81	0.56				

*p<.001

Table 5. Regression Analysis of Interaction Effect of Chance of Injury
x Age on Desire to Stay With Employer

Predictor	Unstandardized Coefficient	Standard Error	Standardized Coefficient	t-score
Respondents 33 years or less (N = 145)				
chance of injury	0.16	0.08	0.16	1.98*
<u>constant</u>	4.15	0.44		
Respondents older than 33 years (N = 118)				
chance of injury	0.25	0.08	0.27	3.06**
<u>constant</u>	4.39	0.47		

*p<05
**p<01

Table 6. Stepwise Regression Analysis of Belief Respondent Will be With His Current Employer in a Year

Step	Predictor Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standard Error	Standardized Coefficients	t-scores	R ²	Change in R ²
1	positive job features	0.30	0.03	0.53	10.00***	0.28	0.28
	<u>constant</u>	0.77	0.48				
2	positive job features	0.27	0.03	0.49	9.16***	0.32	0.04
	chance of injury	0.20	0.06	0.19	3.59***		
	<u>constant</u>	0.11	0.51				
3	positive job features	0.50	0.08	0.89	6.53***	0.35	0.03
	chance of injury	0.86	0.22	0.84	4.01***		
	chance of injury x positive job features	-0.04	0.01	-0.85	3.20**		
	<u>constant</u>	-3.30	1.18				
4	positive job features	0.48	0.08	0.86	6.31***	0.36	0.01
	chance of injury	0.88	0.21	0.86	4.13***		
	chance of injury x positive job features	-0.04	0.01	-0.87	3.29**		
	ability to change jobs	-0.15	0.06	-0.13	2.44*		
	<u>constant</u>	-2.65	1.20				

*p<05

**p<01

***p<001

a 4.0% increase in explained variance. The more remote the chances of injury are perceived to be, the more one feels that he will remain at the present job. Ability to change jobs, as before, is inversely related to staying with one's employer.

Table 7 shows the chance of injury X positive job features interaction. Risk of injury becomes a very salient factor, influencing one's belief about staying with his employer, only for respondents rating their jobs unfavorable in terms of pay, interest, and job security. On the other hand, where the job is rated positively on these attributes, risk of injury is not a factor.

3. Log Linear Analysis of Looked for Another Job.

Table 8 shows the effect of each predictor variable and interaction term in the hypothesized logit model. The goodness of fit test provided for this model by the Likelihood Ratio Chi Square is 21.95 (df = 22, p = 0.46). The strongest effect in the model is the skewed distribution of the dependent variable itself. Twenty-five percent of respondents have looked for another job in the last year, but the vast majority (75.0%) have not. Age (X_1), months at one's current job (X_2), and positive job features (X_4) are significantly related to this dependent variable. As was discussed earlier, younger respondents, those respondents with brief job tenure, and those rating their current job less attractively are more likely to have looked for other employment in the last year.

The three-way term of looked for another job X chance of injury X age is the only significant interaction involving two predictor variables. Cell frequencies for this term are shown in Table 9. Older respondents are more likely to look for another job when the perceived chance of injury is high (18.3%) rather than low (8.6%). Just the opposite is the case with younger respondents who initiate more job search activities (42.1%) when the chance of injury is low rather than high (29.5%).

Table 7. Interaction Effect of Chance of Injury x Positive Job Aspects
on Belief Respondent will be with his Current Employer in a Year

Predictor	Unstandardized Coefficient	Standard Error	Standardized Coefficient	t-score
Respondents rating job favorably (N = 119)				
chance of injury	0.06	0.07	0.08	<1
<u>constant</u>	5.98	0.43		
Respondents rating job unfavorably (N = 144)				
chance of injury	0.32	0.09	0.30	3.68*
<u>constant</u>	3.15	0.46		

*p<.001

Table 8. Logit Model for Looked for Another Job

Effect	Lambda Coefficient	Standard Error	z-score
Y_3 (looked for another job)	0.78	0.11	7.25***
$Y_3 \times X_1$	-0.20	0.09	2.13*
$Y_3 \times X_2$	-0.35	0.09	3.86***
$Y_3 \times X_3$	0.04	0.09	0.40
$Y_3 \times X_4$	0.27	0.10	2.72**
$Y_3 \times X_5$	0.11	0.11	1.01
$Y_3 \times X_5 \times X_1$	0.21	0.09	2.28*
$Y_3 \times X_5 \times X_2$	-0.10	0.09	1.06
$Y_3 \times X_5 \times X_3$	-0.02	0.09	0.21
$Y_3 \times X_5 \times X_4$	-0.08	0.10	0.83

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Table 9. Interaction Effect if Looked for
a Different Job x Age x Chance of Injury

Chance of Injury is Remote	Age	Have you looked for a different job in the last year?	
		No	Yes
Disagree	young (33 years or less)	62 (70.5%)	26 (29.5%)
	old (34 years or more)	49 (81.7%)	11 (18.3%)
Chi Square = 2.39, df = 1, p < 0.20			
Agree	young (33 years or less)	33 (57.9%)	24 (42.1%)
	old (34 years or more)	53 (91.4%)	5 (8.6%)
Chi Square = 17.09, df = 1, p < 0.01			

Additional contingency table analysis finds that, overall, older respondents are more influenced than younger respondents by the hazardousness of work in their perceived ability to find a better job and in their ratings of their present employment. In examining the impact of age and hazardousness on ability to get another job, we find that younger respondents believe that their ability to get a better job is slightly better when their current work is judged to be safe rather than hazardous. Sixty-nine percent of young respondents feel they have a greater than average chance of landing a better job when working conditions are safe, compared to 39.0% of older respondents (Chi Square = 10.58, $df = 1$, p less than 0.01). When working under riskier conditions, younger respondents show a 5.0% drop, with only 64.0% above the median in ability to get a better job. Older respondents, in contrast, increase their belief by 11.0% that they can get a better job, with 50.0% being above the median (Chi Square = 2.78, $df = 1$, $p = 0.10$). Thus, the degree of perceived risk of injury has only a minor effect on beliefs held by younger respondents than they can find a better job; in either instance, they remain optimistic. Older respondents are more responsive to work hazards. Risk of injury is not only a motive for actually seeking another job but also increases beliefs that they can find a better one.

Older respondents are also more likely to allow safety considerations affect their rating of other, seemingly unrelated, job features. Seventy-six percent of older respondents rated their job above the median on attributes such as money, job security, and interest, compared to 51.0% of younger respondents, when the chance of injury from accidents was very remote (Chi Square = 7.74, $df = 1$, p less than 0.01). This endorsement drops for older respondents to 40.0% and to 26.0% of younger respondents when the job is hazardous (Chi Square = 3.27, $df = 1$, $p = 0.07$). While younger respondents show a 25.0% drop in the

number believing their work is above the median on positive attributes when there is an increased risk of injury, the drop of 36.0% for older respondents is significantly greater.

Finally, a respondent's search for another job is highly influenced by both age and ratings of current employment. Older respondents are only likely to look for another job when they rate their current job below the median on positive features. Twenty-six percent of older respondents rating their current jobs low have looked for other employment in the last year. Less than 1.0% of older respondents have looked for work when they rate their present work highly (Chi Square = 12.40, df = 1, p less than 0.001). More younger respondents (39.0%) rating their current jobs low than those rating their jobs above the median (25.0%) had sought other work. These percentage differences are not, however, statistically significant (Chi Square = 3.07, df = 1, p = 0.08).

DISCUSSION

Variables affecting intentions to change jobs and actual job search behavior were investigated. Positive job features, i.e., amount of income earned, job security, and intrinsic interest in the type of work that one does, were the dominant factors influencing a desire to retain one's present position or to look for something new. Respondents viewing their job positively were less desirous of a change. Perceived ability to acquire a "better" job was also a strong determinant. Those persons feeling that they could not get a better job than their present one tended to stay put.

An individual's age and length of time spent with the current employer were significantly related to efforts over the last twelve months to find another job. Younger respondents and those with shorter job tenure were more likely to have searched for other employment.

The major predictor variable of concern in this study -- perceived personal risk and chance of injury -- was related to the dependent variables largely by interacting with other predictors. The only significant main effect of this variable was in terms of beliefs that respondents would continue to work for their present employers over the next year. Those perceiving greater hazardousness in their work were less likely to believe they would be working for their present employer. Chance of injury was also significantly related to this measure of employment stability through its interaction with the index of positive job features. The relative hazardousness of one's work only became a factor when the job was rated poorly in terms of pay, security, and interest. Employees seem willing to tolerate hazardous conditions only as long as other job features, namely money, job security, and interest, are satisfactory. In the absence of these positive attributes, the risk of personal injury increases one's desire to look elsewhere for work.

A person's age also emerged in this study as a powerful mediating variable between risk of injury and desire to stay with one's current employer. Older respondents (34 years or more) were more profoundly influenced by hazardousness. As the chance of injury increased, they were less desirous of staying with the present employer. Risk of injury was a less significant predictor for those workers under 34 years.

Age was also a critical factor in the decision to look for a new job. Younger workers and those with lower seniority at their present job were more likely to report looking for another job in the last twelve months. Commitment to a particular employer tends to increase as one ages or greater seniority is acquired. A move for such individuals would be more costly because financial or job security benefits would be sacrificed. For older workers facing fewer productive years to work before retirement, it may be more difficult to begin

anew with another employer. For younger workers with a shorter tenure at any particular employer, a move may be less costly. Risk of injury appears, however, to provide a strong exception to this impact of age on employment stability and loyalty. Older workers are more inclined than younger workers to report job search activities when the risk of personal injury at their current work is high. The risk of injury may be a stronger inducement to leave for older workers because the physical injury resulting from accidents may be perceived as more debilitating by the older person. For any given injury, older workers may judge their period of recovery to be longer, more painful, and more costly than do younger workers. Older workers' costs from injuries may include substantially greater loss of income since they would be absent from work for a longer period of time and their earnings, normally, for any period of time would be greater to begin with than earnings received by younger, less senior, workers. Those dependent on older workers, such as non-working wives, or children, might also suffer. It is likely that older workers have acquired more "costly" responsibilities such as mortgages, more children (and older children), and retired parents who rely on them for support. The "costs" of injuries to younger workers should be less because they have had less time to acquire these dependents. They may view themselves as in less jeopardy because of their ability to recover from an injury physically and financially more quickly.

While there were no relevant survey items allowing us to assess age differences in perceived speed of recovery following an accident, there were items that could determine whether the age differences in response to occupational risk were, in fact, due to differences in responsibilities to others. That is, do older workers change jobs when their current work is hazardous because of their greater obligations to others?

To test this, it was hypothesized that the presence or absence of children in a worker's household would affect his reaction to occupational hazards; i.e., they would be more inclined to look for another job if there was a high perceived risk of injury and if they had dependent children at home. In examining this relationship there was, in fact, no statistically significant association between a worker's age and whether or not they had children at home or the number of children. Older workers did, however, have older children at home. There was a significant overall effect of having children on one's response to occupational hazards. Thus, 35.0% of all respondents with children looked for work when they perceived their job was hazardous compared to 18.0% of those in a "safe" job (Chi Square = 3.72, df = 1, p less than 0.05). Twenty percent of respondents without children working at unsafe jobs looked for work compared to 29.0% of those in a safe job (Chi Square = 2.03, df = 1, p = 0.15).

For all respondents, the presence of children in a household increases one's motivation to look for work when the current job is unsafe. This tendency, however, continues to be strongest for older workers. Looking first at younger workers without children, the probability of looking for work is greater (49.0%) when the job is safe than when it is unsafe (28.0%) (Chi Square = 4.26, df = 1, p less than 0.05). For young workers with one or more children, the percentages looking for work are about the same, regardless of whether risk of injury is low (26.0%) or high (31.1%) (Chi Square = 0.4, df = 1, p = 0.71). For these younger workers, what seems to change when they have children to support is reduced job search by persons in safe occupations rather than greater job search by those in hazardous jobs.

A much different picture emerges for older workers. For those without children, 8.0% look for work when the chance of injury is great versus 4.0% when injury is remote (Chi Square = 0.49, df = 1, p = 0.48). For those with one or

more children, 39.0% report looking for work when their jobs are unsafe compared to 13.0% when the job is safe (Chi Square = 4.99, df = 1, p less than 0.05). In summarizing this, we find that the age difference in response to unsafe working conditions is greatest for older workers who have children. They are the ones most motivated to find other work when their current job is unsafe. Older workers without children tend to avoid looking for another job, even if their current work is unsafe. Overall, older workers in safe jobs show a nine percent greater likelihood of looking for a better job when they have children at home versus not having children. In contrast, there is a 31.0% increased likelihood of looking for work when the job is unsafe.

To eliminate the possibility that age differences in response to safe and unsafe working conditions were really due to differences in income earned, e.g., older workers in unsafe jobs might earn less than older workers in safe jobs and, therefore, be motivated to change jobs in order to increase their income, the contingency analyses reported in this study were recalculated controlling for income. There were no significant changes. While income tended to increase with age, it was unrelated to the safety of an occupation.

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